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C O N F I D E N T I A L VATICAN 001738

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE (D. MENNUTI)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2012

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SUBJECT: VATICAN TELLS AMBASSADOR: POWELL IS NEEDED  
IMMEDIATELY

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR JIM NICHOLSON FOR REASONS 1.5 (A) AND (D).

1. (C) FOREIGN MINISTER TAURAN CALLED AMBASSADOR THIS MORNING (4/08). TAURAN SAID THAT HE HAD JUST SPOKEN TO THE PAPAL NUNCIO IN JERUSALEM WHO WAS CONTACTED BY SENIOR ARAFAT AIDE MUSTAFI. MUSTAFI ASKED THAT THE VATICAN CONVEY TO US THE NEED FOR SECRETARY POWELL TO GO IMMEDIATELY TO JERUSALEM. HE SAID IF THE SECRETARY WAITS UNTIL THURSDAY OR FRIDAY "HE WILL ONLY FIND RUINS AND DEAD". TAURAN URGED THE SECRETARY TO  
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TAKE THIS MESSAGE SERIOUSLY.

2. (C) THE ISRAELIS TOLD US EARLIER IN THE DAY THAT TAURAN CALLED AMBASSADOR LAMDAN ALSO THIS MORNING. ACCORDING TO ISRAELI EMBASSY SOURCE, IT WAS A "DIFFICULT CONVERSATION". ISRAELIS CLAIM THAT TAURAN SAID IF REPORTS ARE TRUE THAT ISRAELI SOLDIERS HAVE FIRED INTO THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, THE VATICAN WILL REACT "VERY STRONGLY". NICHOLSON

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